

**GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE!**

**THANK YOU FOR THAT INTRODUCTION, STEVE.**

**MAYORS CASON, LEVINE AND REGALADO, REPRESENTATIVE RICHARDSON -- IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU HERE IN SUPPORT OF OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY.**

**STRATTON AND JOE – IT'S NICE TO SEE SOME OF OUR MOST ACTIVE EQUAL-RIGHTS LEADERS AND ADVOCATES HERE AS WELL.**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IT'S GREAT TO BE WITH ALL OF YOU HERE AT JUNGLE ISLAND THIS AFTERNOON TO SHARE SOME THOUGHTS ON OUR GOALS FOR THE NEXT YEAR AND HOW WE CAN CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY.**

**THE MIAMI-DADE GAY AND LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND THE L.G.B.T. COMMUNITY AT LARGE, PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN MOVING OUR COMMUNITY FORWARD AND CREATING GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL OUR RESIDENTS.**

**I LOOK TO EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM TO TAKE US TO THE NEXT LEVEL.**

**I GAVE MY FIFTH STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS LAST WEDNESDAY, AND THIS IS THE FIFTH STATE OF THE COMMUNITY ADDRESS I WILL DELIVER FOR THE CHAMBER.**

**FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ATTENDED OR HEARD ABOUT MY SPEECH, YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT I SHARED A LOT OF GOOD NEWS.**

**THE STATE OF OUR COUNTY IS INDEED STRONG, AND TOGETHER, OUR COMMUNITY IS MAKING IT EVEN STRONGER BY BUILDING UPON THE SOLID FOUNDATION WE'VE LAID FOR A BETTER FUTURE.**

**HERE ARE SOME OF THE WAYS WE'RE MOVING FORWARD:**

**OUR FINANCIAL HOUSE IS IN ORDER. IN FACT, THE COUNTY'S FIVE-YEAR BUDGET FORECAST CONTINUES TO BE BALANCED WITH CONSERVATIVE GROWTH ESTIMATES AND WITHOUT A NEED TO RAISE OVERALL TAXES.**

**OUR \$6.8-BILLION-DOLLAR ADOPTED BUDGET ALSO CONTINUES THE COUNTY'S SUSTAINABLE SPENDING PRACTICES. BY FISCAL YEAR 2019-20, RESERVES ARE ESTIMATED TO REACH \$100 MILLION DOLLARS OF THE TOTAL GENERAL FUND-SUPPORTED BUDGET.**

**AFTER YEARS OF SACRIFICE, THAT'S GOOD NEWS WE CAN ALL CELEBRATE, BUT ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY BECAUSE WE CONTINUE TO HAVE GOOD CONDITIONS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.**

**BETTER DAYS ARE DEFINITELY HERE FROM AN ECONOMIC STANDPOINT. WE'VE CREATED 132,000 PRIVATE-SECTOR JOBS IN OUR COMMUNITY AND OUR OVERALL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS DOWN FROM AROUND 12 PERCENT IN 2011 TO ABOUT 6 PERCENT TODAY.**

**OUR TWO-LARGEST ECONOMIC ENGINES -- MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND PORTMIAMI -- BOTH HAD RECORD-BREAKING YEARS IN TERMS OF PASSENGERS AND CARGO.**

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS ALSO ATTRACTING MORE INVESTMENTS THAT ARE PROJECTED TO CREATE THOUSANDS OF NEW JOBS IN THE COMING YEARS. AND WE'VE WORKED TO DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMY BY INVESTING IN FIELDS RANGING FROM CLEAN ENERGY AND GROUND TRANSPORTATION TO ART, FILM AND ENTERTAINMENT. THOSE INVESTMENTS ALONE ARE PROJECTED TO RESULT IN APPROXIMATELY 2,000 NEW, WELL-PAYING JOBS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.**

**WE'RE ALSO CONTINUING THE SUCCESSFUL EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE INITIATIVE. AS OF TODAY, WE'VE REGISTERED 1,762 RESIDENTS AND PLACED 280 IN JOBS IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY.**

**AND WE'VE CONTINUED TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR EVERY MIAMI-DADE RESIDENT BY BRINGING YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT CLOSER TO OUR COMMUNITY AND ADDRESSING YOUR NEEDS.**

**YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT ALSO WORKED TO BE EVEN MORE INCLUSIVE. AS YOU MAY RECALL, LAST YEAR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY GOVERNMENT VOTED TO PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION BASED ON A PERSON'S GENDER IDENTITY OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION. AND WE WELCOMED THE COURT RULINGS THAT FINALLY GAVE ADULTS THE RIGHT TO MARRY WHOMEVER THEY CHOOSE.**

**I WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORTED BOTH BECAUSE IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO!**

**WE ALSO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE CRITICAL SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS IN NEED -- ESPECIALLY CHILDREN AND SENIORS. AND WE'VE CONTINUED TO INVEST IN ANIMAL SERVICES AND INCREASED OUR**

**SAVE RATE TO 90 PERCENT. THAT'S A HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT!**

**WE KNOW THAT SOUTH FLORIDA IS GROUND ZERO FOR SEA-LEVEL RISE AND THAT'S WHY WE ALSO CONTINUE OUR WORK TO ADAPT TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA-LEVEL RISE. AMONG OUR MANY ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES, WE SIGNED THE U.S.-CHINA CLIMATE LEADERS' DECLARATION.**

**WE ALSO MET WITH U.S. ENERGY SECRETARY ERNEST MONIZ AND HIRED A CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER.**

**WE CHALLENGED OUR LOCAL UNIVERSITIES TO PROPOSE STEPS FOR ADAPTING TO SEA-LEVEL RISE AND CLIMATE CHANGE, AND WE CONTINUE OUR WORK ON A MULTI-BILLION-DOLLAR PROJECT TO RENEW AND STRENGTHEN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE -- WHICH IS CRITICAL TO OUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE.**

**WE'VE ALSO TAKEN A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO IMPROVING MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTY. OUR NEW UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WILL LEAD THE CHARGE TO GIVE OUR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS THE CLEAN, SAFE,**

**RELIABLE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONVENIENT  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM WE NEED.**

**OUR CHALLENGES WON'T BE SOLVED OVERNIGHT,  
BUT WE'VE ALREADY HAD EARLY SUCCESSES.**

**THESE SUCCESSES INCLUDE THE METRORAIL  
EXPRESS TO AND FROM DOWNTOWN; OUR CLEANER  
FLEET OF BUSES AND TRAINS; AND THE IMPROVED  
SYNCHRONIZATION OF TRAFFIC SIGNALS ON SOME  
OF OUR MAJOR CORRIDORS, WHICH HAVE  
IMPROVED TRAFFIC FLOW.**

**LATER THIS MONTH, WE WILL UNVEIL OUR  
COUNTY'S COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION  
PLAN AND WAYS THAT OUR COMMUNITY CAN GET  
INVOLVED IN THE CONVERSATION.**

**ALL IDEAS TO IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION AND  
MOBILITY ARE WELCOME BECAUSE AS WE CAN  
AGREE, THE LESS TIME WE SPEND IN TRAFFIC IS  
MORE TIME WE GET TO SPEND WITH THE PEOPLE WE  
LOVE!**

**AS YOU'VE HEARD ME SAY MANY TIMES BEFORE, MY  
TOP PRIORITY AS MAYOR OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY  
IS THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF ALL OUR  
RESIDENTS. AND THAT'S WHY WE CONTINUE TO  
INVEST IN THE MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT.**

**WE'RE ADDING 125 MORE POLICE OFFICERS IN OUR COMMUNITY BY THE FALL OF THIS YEAR, AND EQUIPPING 1,000 OF THEM WITH BODY-WORN CAMERAS BECAUSE WE WANT TO BUILD MORE CONFIDENCE BETWEEN OUR COMMUNITY AND OFFICERS.**

**WE ALSO CONTINUE TO REPLACE OUR VEHICLE FLEET AND MODERNIZE OUR REAL-TIME CRIME CENTER. AND WE HAVE A NEW DIRECTOR OF THE MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT, JUAN PEREZ – WHO WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH YOU TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED SAFETY OF ALL RESIDENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY.**

**YOUTH VIOLENCE IS KEY CONCERN OF MINE, AND THE SAFETY OF EVERY CHILD...OF EVERY RESIDENT IN THIS COMMUNITY...IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY. WE MUST WORK TOGETHER -- LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE COMMUNITY -- TO PUT A STOP TO THE VIOLENCE. AND I HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT DIRECTOR PEREZ AND THE M.D.P.D. WILL CONTINUE THEIR GOOD WORK.**

**TO MOVE OUR COMMUNITY FORWARD TOGETHER, WE MUST ALSO CONTINUE TO INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP. THAT'S WHY WE CONTINUE TO PARTNER WITH THE EMERGE AMERICAS**

**CONFERENCE, VENTURE HIVE, JACKSON HEALTH AND THE KNIGHT FOUNDATION, AMONG OTHER KEY ORGANIZATIONS IN OUR COMMUNITY.**

**WE'RE ALSO INVESTING IN CREATING MORE GREEN SPACES, CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND LIBRARIES. WE'RE ALSO EXPANDING AND RENOVATING EXISTING SPACES TO CONTINUE TO POSITION MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AS THE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY.**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I'VE BEEN A PUBLIC SERVANT FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS, AND I'VE NEVER BEEN MORE EXCITED TO SERVE THIS COMMUNITY. THAT'S WHY MY ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO PUT SERVICE TO OUR RESIDENTS ABOVE ALL ELSE.**

**THAT'S MY PROMISE TO YOU. TOGETHER -- YOUR GOVERNMENT, OUR RESIDENTS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR -- WILL CONTINUE TO TRANSFORM MIAMI-DADE COUNTY INTO A WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY.**

**WE'VE COME A LONG WAY...THROUGH RECESSION, DIFFICULT BUDGETS AND OTHER CHALLENGES. TODAY, WE'RE MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER IN A MUCH BETTER DIRECTION.**



**BUT OUR WORK IS NOT DONE. AND THE ONLY WAY TO BUILD ON THE PROGRESS WE'VE MADE, IS TO CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER.**

**AND THAT'S WHERE ALL OF YOU COME IN.**

**THE INCREDIBLE GROWTH THAT WE SEE ALL AROUND US IS MADE POSSIBLE BY ORGANIZATIONS LIKE YOURS...AND FROM THE HARD WORK AND DEDICATION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN IN THIS ROOM.**

**SO, WE NEED YOU TO REMAIN ACTIVE AND VOCAL IN HELPING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY MOVE FORWARD.**

**MY OFFICE IS ALWAYS OPEN TO FEEDBACK AND NEW IDEAS FROM OUR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS WHO, EVERY DAY, ARE MAKING OUR COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.**

**IF THERE IS ANY WAY WE CAN MAKE YOUR WORK EASIER, PLEASE LET US KNOW.**

**BECAUSE, AS LONG AS I'M MAYOR OF THIS WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY, YOU HAVE A PARTNER IN COUNTY HALL.**

**THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN FOR INVITING ME TO  
SPEAK TO YOU TODAY.**

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND MAY GOD CONTINUE  
TO BLESS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!**